



# Balloons and sky lanterns

# Balloons and sky lanterns

If you wish to use council-owned land for a function or event, you will not be permitted to allow the release of sky lanterns or balloons. This also applies to any events supported by the council, including those not on council land.

The release of helium filled balloons and Chinese/sky lanterns has increased in recent years. These balloons and lanterns pose hazards to wildlife and livestock including injury and possibly death. Lanterns can also cause damage to buildings and cause callouts to the fire service.

- **Danger to wildlife and livestock**

Balloons and sky lanterns can cause significant harm to wildlife and livestock. Parts may be eaten or accidentally included in animal feed causing internal damage to animals. Animals may also become entangled in fallen parts such as wires or string and suffer injury and distress struggling to get free.

- **Fire hazard**

Sky lanterns are made of thin paper held by a wire or bamboo frame and lifted by heat from a naked flame. They pose a fire hazard to dry standing crops, stacks of hay or straw, forestry and farm buildings, and other buildings. Even biodegradable lanterns still pose a fire risk.

- **Littering**

Balloons and lanterns cause litter wherever they fall back to land or sea. Despite being labelled biodegradable, bamboo lanterns can still take decades to degrade.

Whilst the council ban relates solely to council properties, land and events, we encourage the public to act responsibly and consider the risks posed through the release of helium balloons and sky lanterns, particularly to livestock and the environment.

Some alternatives you may wish to consider for events or memorial purposes are flowers, flags, banners, balloon sculptures, blowing bubbles or virtual tribute balloons.

[www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/litter/balloon-and-sky-lantern-alternatives](http://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/litter/balloon-and-sky-lantern-alternatives)

[www.mcsuk.org/campaigns/dont-let-go-councils](http://www.mcsuk.org/campaigns/dont-let-go-councils)

This policy applies to the deliberate release of sky lanterns and helium balloons, such as the mass release of balloons at events. It is recognised there may be instances where single helium balloons will be accidentally released into the environment.